
ORGAN DONOR INFORMATION

PURPOSE

To comply with state legislation requiring EMS field personnel to search for organ donor information on adult patients for whom death appears imminent.

AUTHORITY

California Health and Safety Code, Section 7152.5, b (3) and c, d, and e

DEFINITIONS

Reasonable Search: A brief attempt by Emergency Medical Services field personnel to locate documentation that may identify a patient as a potential organ donor, or one who has refused to make an anatomical gift. This search shall be limited to a wallet or purse that is on or near the individual to locate a driver's license or other identification card with this information. A reasonable search shall not take precedence over patient care/treatment.

Imminent Death: A condition wherein illness or injuries are of such severity that in the opinion of Emergency Medical Services personnel, death is likely to occur before the patient arrives at the receiving hospital.

POLICY

Existing law provides that any individual who is at least 18 years of age may make an anatomical gift, and sets forth procedures for making that anatomical gift, including signing a donor card that may be attached to a driver's license or identification card.

1. When emergency medical services (EMS) personnel encounter an unconscious adult patient for whom it appears death is imminent a reasonable search of the patient's belonging should be made to determine if the individual carries information indicating status as an organ donor. This search shall not interfere with patient care or transport. Any inventory of victim's personal effects should be on the patient care record and signed by the person who receives the patient.
2. All EMS personnel shall notify the receiving hospital if organ donor information is discovered.
3. Any organ donor document discovered should be transported to the receiving hospital with the patient unless the investigating law enforcement officer requests the document. In the event that no transport is made, any document should remain with the patient.
4. Field personnel should briefly note the results of the search, notification of hospital, and witness name(s), on the ICEMA Patient Care Report.
5. No search is to be made by field personnel after the patient has expired.